GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1922
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2003
ILL EFFECTS OF G.M. CROPS
MAHBOOB ZAHEDI;SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI;SUNDER LAL TIWARI

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the ill effects of G.M. crops as reported in Rashtriya Sahara dated October 31, 2003;

(b) if so, the details and facts thereof;

(c) whether insects and butterflies keep away from G.M. crops causing ecological imbalance;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(e) whether the Government propose to carry out long term trials before taking any decision regarding switching over to G.M. crops; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) Government is aware of the news item.

(b) The ill-effects reported in the said news item are referred in relation to crops other than cotton, which is the only crop wherein genetically modified Bt cotton hybrids have been released for farmers' cultivation in India. Even for the released Bt cotton hybrids, detailed scrutiny of biosafety and environmental safety aspects has been conducted under the aegis of Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) of the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India.

(c) No, Sir. This statement is not scientifically correct.

(d) The question does not arise.

(e) & (f): In India, the development of GM crops involves various steps starting from contained green house studies to contained open field small scale and large scale trials. The studies and trials on GM crops are monitored by various statutory bodies as per the Rules, 1989 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. The Government takes decision on the GM crops on case-by-case basis, depending upon the target gene inserted, the crop and the intended use of the crop.